NUMB. XCVIII.

The GUARDIAN.

In ſeſe redit—— Virg.

Friday, July 3. 1713.

THE firſt who undertook to inſtruct the World in ſingle Papers, was *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* of famous Memory. A Man nearly related to the Family of the IRONSIDES. We have often ſmoked a Pipe together, for I was ſo much in his Books, that at his Deceaſe he left me a Silver Standiſh, a pair of Spectacles, and the Lamp by which he uſed to write his Lucubrations.

The venerable *Iſaac* was ſucceeded by a Gentleman of the ſame Family, very memorable for the Shortneſs of his Face and of his Speeches. This Ingenious Author publiſhed his Thoughts, and held his Tongue, with great Applauſe, for two Years together.

I NESTOR IRONSIDE have now for ſome Time undertaken to fill the Place of theſe my two renowned Kinſmen and Predeceſſors. For it is obſerved of every Branch of our Family, that we have all of us a wonderful Inclination to give good Advice, though it is remarked of ſome of us, that we are apt on this occaſion rather to give than take.

However it be, I cannot but obſerve with ſome ſecret Pride, that this way of Writing diurnal Papers has not ſucceeded for any ſpace of Time in any Perſons who are not of our Line. I believe I ſpeak within compaſs, when I affirm that above a hundred different Authors have endeavoured after our Family-way of Writing. Some of which have been Writers in other kinds of the greateſt Eminence in the Kingdom; but I do not know how it has happened, they have none of them hit upon the Art. Their Projects have always dropt after a few unſucceſsful Eſſays. It puts me in mind of a Story which was lately told me by a pleaſant Friend of mine, who has a very fine Hand on the Violin. His Maid Servant ſeeing his Inſtrument lying upon the Table, and being ſenſible there was Muſick in it, if ſhe knew how to fetch it out, drew the Bow over every part of the Strings, and at laſt told her Maſter ſhe had tried the Fiddle all over, but could not for her Heart find whereabout the Tune lay.

But though the whole Burden of ſuch a Paper is only fit to reſt on the Shoulders of a *Bickerſtaff* or an *Ironſide*; there are ſeveral who can acquit themſelves of a ſingle Day's Labour in it with ſuitable Abilities. Theſe are Gentlemen whom I have often invited to this Tryal of Wit, and who have ſeveral of them acquitted themſelves to my private Emolument, as well as to their own Reputation. My Paper among the Republick of Letters is the *Ulyſſes* his Bow, in which every Man of Wit or Learning may try his Strength. One who does not care to write a Book without being ſure of his Abilities, may ſee by this means if his Parts and Talents are to the Publick Taſte.

This I take to be of great Advantage to Men of the beſt Senſe, who are always diffident of their private judgment, till it receives a Sanction from the publick. *Provoco ad Populum*, I appeal to the People, was the uſual Saying of a very excellent Dramatick Poet, when he had any Diſputes with parti-

(Price Two Pence.)